

Comment Letter I124

Aug 30 04 01:29p L.David Montague

650-325-0451

p.2

Aug 30 04 01:29p L.David Montague

650-325-0451

p.3

I124

LDMAssociatesEngineering and Management Consultants
1205 Hillview Drive, Menlo Park, CA 94025-5510

Phone: 650-325-8019

Fax: 650-325-0451

Email: dmonta@ldma.com

To: California High Speed Train
Draft Program EIR/EIS Comments

From L. David Montague

29 August, 2004

**Subject: COMMENTS ON HIGH SPEED RAILDRAFT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT****Background**

The Caltrain strategic plan calls for improvements to the commuter train system. These include:

- Already completed purchase of the Southern Pacific rights of way and trackage between San Francisco and Gilroy, and from Redwood City across the Dumbarton rail bridge to Fremont
- A mix of local trains and new express trains known as the "Baby Bullet" that began service recently between San Francisco and San Jose using diesel powered engines. Eventually all would be electrified.
- The addition of passing tracks to allow more efficient scheduling of the baby bullet express trains that only stop at a few stations between San Jose and San Francisco
- Continued grade separations throughout the commute corridor that will improve safety, traffic flow, and eliminate the noise of train horns that currently must be sounded at all on grade crossings.
- Future electrification of the entire corridor, intended to provide even lower noise levels, more environmentally friendly operations as well as higher acceleration to top speed for faster service.

Most of these improvements to date have been funded by local Measure A passed by Peninsula voters. Current and future Measure A funds have been earmarked for electrification. If properly done emphasizing the criteria to minimize impacts to communities, residential and business property along the corridor as well as project cost, these improvements

meet Caltrain's goals and would provide clear benefits to the Peninsula with continued voter support. Studies are currently on-going to develop solutions achievable within the current Caltrain rights of way that meet those criteria .

High Speed Rail use of this existing corridor would impose requirements that preclude meeting the above criteria causing dramatic environmental impacts and make the desirable solutions unworkable. We therefore oppose it.

The High Speed Rail Authority plans call for a track routing from southern California up the central valley and coming over to the Santa Clara Valley either through Pacheco Pass or through Henry Coe State Park, and then up to San Jose and the Bay Area. While the original route was to come from the central valley to the Bay Area through the Altamont Pass to Fremont, lobbying by San Jose and Silicon Valley luminaries resulted in the routes shown in the EIR.

Both Caltrain and the High Speed Rail Authority have assumed that "economic benefits" justify having the HSR continue from San Jose to San Francisco through the Caltrain peninsula commute corridor widened to accommodate four tracks that would be required to bypass local trains. The economic benefit seen by Caltrain is that funding from HSR would be used to help pay for grade separation and electrification of the corridor, and potentially contribute to its maintenance, while the economic benefits for HSR would be a direct connection to the anticipated San Francisco rider-ship market.

What are the HSR Environmental Issues on the Peninsula?

- Additional right of way for High Speed Rail tracks causes major impact in the extensive non-industrial areas adjacent to the existing corridor.
 - Permanent taking of valuable residential and commercial property
 - Loss of many trees now screening adjacent surviving homes from tracks and train noise
 - Major loss of value to adjacent surviving properties
 - Construction causes even more un-necessary destruction and impact to local property.
 - Increased cost of the project
- High Speed Rail offers no benefits to Peninsula residents

I124-1
cont.

I124-2

I124-3

1

2

Comment Letter I124 Continued

Aug 30 04 01:29p L.David Montague 650-325-0451 p.4

- With a quiet electric Caltrain baby bullet from Gilroy to SF, why do we need HSR running up the Peninsula in excess of 100 mph with its major impacts?

The fundamental problem as we see it is that the HSR concept is incompatible with the environment along the Peninsula corridor. It has major negative impacts to property along the right of way because of the additional right of way width and permanent loss of trees required for the construction of a four-track system in the corridor, as well as the safety and aerodynamic noise issues of trains running at speeds in excess of 100 mph through Peninsula residential communities. These impacts involve major disruptions and devalue both commercial and residential property.

These impacts, both during extended construction and permanently have not been adequately included nor assessed in the draft EIR that has been posted. Moreover, if HSR does not connect to regional transit, and instead overrides it, HSR subverts Bay Area regional transportation objectives, adds dramatically to the cost of corridor upgrades, and diverts ridership.

As projected, HSR in the Peninsula corridor subverts the will of the voters for a fast effective commuter service. Measure A was passed by Peninsula voters specifically to improve transportation infrastructure along the Peninsula in order to mitigate growing highway congestion. It was not to provide a fast train convenient for travel between San Francisco or San Jose and downtown Los Angeles. HSR offers no benefit to Peninsula community residents or businesses. If HSR is allowed to drive the Peninsula corridor as proposed, it will actually impede improved commuter service and increase the cost. The voters who passed measure A will have been betrayed with a bait and switch that negatively impacts peninsula residents without benefit. The inevitable result will be a delay in getting needed corridor grade separations started and completed and the creation of a powerful constituency opposed to the HSR project in its entirety.

Viable alternates not considered

Alternate routes such as the Altamont Pass have been dropped from consideration without justification. Solutions that integrate with regional transportation and reduce HSR project cost have not been included.

I124-3
cont.

I124-4

3

Aug 30 04 01:29p L.David Montague 650-325-0451 p.5

- HSR if built to San Jose should terminate there, or continue up the east side of the bay thru industrial areas, not thru residential areas along the peninsula. Instead, it should connect at Diridon Station with Caltrain's baby bullet. This reduces HSR project cost.
- The Altamont Pass route offers another option to terminate at Fremont, connecting with existing/planned regional transit, or then proceed south to San Jose and/or to Oakland. Caltrain crossing the Dumbarton corridor can connect with the HSR and BART at Fremont using the refurbished Dumbarton rail bridge.

Either way, SF and Peninsula riders can connect to HSR via Caltrain baby bullet and/or BART by simply walking across a platform.

Environmental and economic benefits of the alternates to the San Francisco Peninsula HSR route

- An integrated transportation solution using BART and Caltrain regional transit to connect to HSR when and if it is approved. If the ridership market is really as projected, this approach enhances regional transit ridership rather than competing with it, and reduces HSR project cost.
- Caltrain can implement minimum impact grade separation and electrification – once, properly – starting now at affordable pace within existing right of way.
- The rail bed in the corridor can remain at current grade at most crossings at a lower total construction cost.
 - Earliest relief of traffic congestion, train noise, and diesel pollution.
 - Least impact to Peninsula residents, businesses
 - Allows at least one additional track where needed for passing
 - Funding via renewed Measure A and federal grants, and where appropriate for interconnects, with HSR funding earmarked for that purpose.

We trust that these comments will receive serious consideration in the final environmental assessment.

Respectfully submitted,

L. David Montague
L. David Montague

I124-5

I124-6

I124-7

4

Response to Comments of L. David Montague, August 29, 2004 (Letter I124)

I124-1

The Authority acknowledges but disagrees with your assessment. The Authority has been working in cooperation with the Caltrain JPB and Samtrans, as well as other local and regional agencies and believe that the concept of HST and improved Caltrain service sharing tracks and right-of-way is consistent with local and regional goals for the corridor (which include grade separations, electrification, and extension of the system to the Transbay Terminal). Many comments in favor of the proposed HST on the San Francisco Peninsula were received from agencies and the public, including MTC, the City of San Francisco, Caltrain JPB, Samtrans, the Transbay Terminal JPB, the City of Los Altos Hills, the City of Milpitas, the City of Santa Clara, the County of Santa Clara, the City of Morgan Hill and the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce.

In coordination with Samtrans, at a conceptual level of design, it has been concluded that the improvements needed for HST service would be almost completely within the existing Caltrain right-of-way, thereby minimizing impacts to neighborhoods, trees, and the natural environment. Should the HST project move forward, more detailed project specific environmental analysis (such as determining property and noise impacts, construction impacts, and indicating any trees scheduled for removal) would be completed. While the Program EIR/EIS acknowledges that there would be potential increases in noise impacts primarily as a result of increased frequency of trains, there would also be a reduction in existing noise levels due to the elimination of horn noise and gate noise from existing services as a result of the grade separations at existing crossings. The Authority acknowledges, but disagrees with your assessments. HST service would have many benefits to the Peninsula and would expedite rather than delay much needed improvements on the corridor such grade separations and electrification. In addition to providing HST service to San Francisco, SFO and the Peninsula, the infrastructure improvements needed would result in a faster, safer, more reliable

with a greater capacity to run more frequent Caltrain commuter rail service. The full grade-separation of the Caltrain corridor would improve local automobile traffic flow and reduce air pollution at existing rail crossings.

Please also see standard response 6.1.4.

I124-2

Please see standard response 2.18.1.

I124-3

Please see response to Comment I124-1.

I124-4

Please see standard response 2.18.1.

I124-5

Please see response to Comment I124-1.

I124-6

Please see standard response 2.18.1.

I124-7

Please see response to Comment I124-1.

Comment Letter I125**I125**

August 26, 2004

Mehdi Morshed
Executive Director
California High Speed Rail Authority
925 L Street, Suite 1425
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Support for High Speed Rail Project – City of Visalia Site

Dear Mr. Morshed:

As an active member in our community, and a valley resident since youth the subject of the High Speed Rail Project is of concern to me. I'd like to thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Draft EIR/EIS on the High Speed Rail project proposed for the State of California. I endorse the project and support the potential alignment along the Union Pacific corridor with a station site in Visalia, California. It is my belief that a station site in Visalia will best maximize ridership opportunities throughout Tulare, southern Fresno and Kings Counties. At the time estimated for the completion of the High Speed Rail project, the regional population for this area is projected to reach 750,000 persons. In addition, the Union Pacific alignment would be located in existing transportation corridors so there would be less potential for significant environmental impacts (e.g. reduced auto emissions, etc. due to shorter driving distances to access trains).

We understand there is some expressed concern regarding the Union Pacific alignment and, if chosen as the preferred route, it would travel directly through the downtown areas of some of the smaller cities located in southern Fresno County and southern Tulare County. I would like to express my support for the evaluation and the possibility of a by-pass route around these smaller rural communities as a resolution to concerns expressed by these communities.

Finally, I believe the proposed Union Pacific alignment would maximize operational and capital costs, while minimizing natural resource disruption. The Union Pacific alignment would provide numerous employment opportunities to the many agricultural communities along the route. High-Speed Rail related growth in service industries would diversify local job markets and provide jobs for low-skilled workers, thus contributing to a reduction of the area's historically high unemployment rate of 17%. The UP alignment would provide the highest potential benefit to helping to reduce unemployment.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on the Draft EIR/EIS and the proposed High Speed Rail Project. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or clarification of any of the comments stated herein. (559-636-7266 ext. 102)

Sincerely,



Dru Quesnoy
Loan Officer, Irwin Mortgage Corporation
Board Member of the Visalia Economic Development Council
President of the Visalia Breakfast Rotary

I125-1

Response to Comments of Dru Quesnoy, August 26, 2004 (Letter I125)

I125-1

Please see standard response 6.21.1 and standard response 6.15.4.

Comment Letter I126

Jun 18 2000 3:44AM HP LASERJET FAX

p. 2
I126

Jun 18 2000 3:44AM HP LASERJET FAX

p. 3

August 30, 2004

Steven Weil
588 West Barstow Avenue
Fresno, CA 93704

Ms. Carrie Pourvahidi
Deputy Director
California High Speed Rail Authority
925 "L" Street, Suite 1425
Sacramento, CA 95814

SUBJECT: Comments on the EIR/EIS for the proposed
California High-Speed Train System Project

Dear Ms. Pourvahidi:

As a resident of Fresno County, a property owner in Fresno and Madera Counties and a longtime registered voter and concerned citizen, I hereby make the following comments on the above-referenced document:

The high speed train system route within Fresno County and Madera County should be located entirely along the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) alignment, with the exception of the following:

- 1) The route should follow the loop ("bypass") westerly of Fresno, generally as depicted in the EIR/EIS, except that the loop should swing more westerly than currently depicted north of W. Whitesbridge, extending in an arc out to the Dickerson alignment just south of the San Joaquin River to create an adequate buffer for urban development envisioned in the Fresno 2025 General Plan;
- 2) The westerly loop referenced in #1 above should continue north into Madera County across the San Joaquin River approximately at the Dickerson alignment, continuing northeast in a gentle "S" curve, crossing Freeway 99 and the Union Pacific (UP) right of way approximately at Avenue 8 and rejoining the BNSF alignment depicted in the EIR/EIS well south of Avenue 12, to avoid impacting the Madera College Growth Area along Avenue 12 west of the BNSF.

The high speed train system route should not occur at any location along the UP alignment in Fresno and Madera Counties. The Fresno station should be located along the above referenced western loop ("bypass") where it intersects the alignment of the San Joaquin Valley Railroad (SJVR -- former UP branch line) just north of State Highway 180 (W. Whitesbridge).

Ms. Carrie Pourvahidi
August 30, 2004/Page 2

S. Weil Comments
HST EIR/EIS

To mitigate the potential growth inducing impacts of this station location, notably on prime agricultural land, establish a direct link to the historic Santa Fe station currently under development at the current Amtrak stop in downtown Fresno and interlink the high speed rail station with the emerging metropolitan and regional transit system as well as the regional airport, Fresno Yosemite International, the following facilities should be constructed in tandem with the high speed train system, fully funded by the high speed train system program as mitigation measures and/or feeder facilities to the system itself:

- 1) Relocation of the existing BNSF freight corridor through Fresno to an alignment parallel to the high speed train system western loop;
- 2) Construction of a light rail transit system on the freed-up BNSF right of way through Fresno, linking the northwest sector of the metropolitan area directly to the emerging multimodal facility at the historic Santa Fe station;
- 3) Construction of a direct light rail link between the high speed train system station on the western loop to the metropolitan light rail transit system referenced in #2 above, with this link to adjoin the current SJVR into Fresno combined with a small length of new right of way to connect to the current BNSF (new light rail) alignment;
- 4) Extension of the light rail system utilizing the existing BNSF right of way easterly parallel to McKinley Avenue to Fresno Yosemite International airport, providing a direct light rail link between the high speed train system station and the airport.

Viewed as a whole, the high speed train system station on the western loop would thus be interconnected with transit links to downtown Fresno at the historic Santa Fe station currently under development, to various stops north and south of downtown along the entire length of the current BNSF right of way through Fresno and to the regional airport.

The physical effect of the high speed train system right of way combined with the parallel relocated BNSF freight right of way, with appropriately spaced east-west grade separated road crossings, could be leveraged to become a "green line" creating a physical barrier (currently lacking) to urban expansion westerly into prime agricultural land. Thus, what may at first appear to be a threat to ag land preservation (a high speed rail station on the western loop) would be turned into an ag land preservation measure with the creation of a strong physical barrier to urban encroachment.

I126-1
cont.

I126-1

Comment Letter I126 Continued

Jun 18 2000 3:44AM HP LASERJET FAX

p. 4

Ms. Carrie Pourvahidi
August 30, 2004/Page 3

S. Weil Comments
HST EIR/EIS

The Fresno station, thus positioned on the western loop, could receive service from any number of high speed trains, express or otherwise, based on market demand. The negative impacts of traffic and land consumption from parking (as is obvious at busy airports) would be minimized at this station location. Downtown Fresno would continue to be the focus of multimodal interconnectivity, with the historic Santa Fe station now under development fully utilized and the investment in that facility protected.

The costs of the added elements of this package: The relocation of the BNSF freight line and the development of the light rail system elements referenced above, could be feasibly covered by the cost savings of not constructing a high speed train system segment along the UP corridor through Fresno. Avoiding the UP corridor avoids a whole series of problematic and costly challenges including accommodating both an elevated high speed rail structure and needed east-west grade separation structures over the UP corridor at numerous locations, dealing with constrained right of way, reestablishing a multimodal station remotely from the one currently under development, mitigating the noise and other impacts of what is in effect a central city route as well as other issues likely to arise.

I126-1
cont.

Sincerely,



Steven Weil

Response to Comments of Steven Weil, August 30, 2004 (Letter I126)

I126-1

Please see standard response 6.20.5.

Comment Letter I127

I127

8/28/04 3:00 PM

197 Fair Oaks Lane
Atherton, CA 94027
(650) 324-8238
August 28, 2004

California High-Speed Rail Authority
925 L Street, Suite 1425
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: California High-Speed Train Draft Program EIR/EIS Comments

Dear California High-Speed Rail Authority:

I have reviewed the Draft Program EIR/EIS for the Proposed California High-Speed Train System and offer comments and suggestions below. In addition to environmental concerns, several ideas are included to make High-Speed Rail more economically viable and more likely to receive voter approval in California's troubled financial situation.

MINIMIZE S.F. BAY AREA DEVASTATION

The EIR/EIS is proposing two almost parallel routes, each about 50 miles in length, north from San Jose, on opposite sides of San Francisco Bay, to Oakland and San Francisco. Each of these routes would bring construction devastation and permanent degradation of countless established communities. Each route also requires tremendous acquisition costs for some of the highest priced real estate in California. Every effort should be made to minimize this community ruination. Options such as the following should receive a comprehensive environmental and economic analysis.

1. Terminate High-Speed Rail at San Jose and utilize Caltrain Baby Bullets and BART upgraded express service for the final links to San Francisco and Oakland.
2. Have High-Speed Rail go to either downtown San Francisco or Oakland but not both. BART trains run between San Francisco and downtown Oakland in less than fifteen minutes with three trains every fifteen minutes on weekdays.

In general it appears that the EIR/EIS gives little consideration to utilization of and integration with existing rail and urban commuter lines. If the California High-Speed Rail Authority and other transportation agencies could coordinate planning and funding, it should result in a more cost and service effective overall transportation system.

RECONSIDER ALTAMONT ROUTE

It appears that the Altamont Pass route, after having previously been considered the preferred alternative from the Central Valley to the San Francisco Bay Area, has been excluded from consideration in the EIR/EIS. This alternative has environmental and economic advantages that should be reconsidered and thoroughly evaluated for the following reasons:

1. The alternative route through Henry Coe State Park has significant negative environmental as well as cost impacts (tunneling under the park) and would probably not be viable.
2. The Pacheco Pass alternative would make travel times between Sacramento and San Francisco or Oakland so lengthy as to be non-competitive with both automobile and air travel.
3. The Altamont Pass alternative avoids major negative environmental impacts, such as tree removal, and major disruption of established residential communities along the southern portion of the Caltrain Corridor.
4. If either the Oakland or San Francisco terminus were eliminated, as suggested above, it would not be necessary for the system to split in three directions at Newark / Fremont. It would only be necessary to split in two directions to serve San Jose and either San Francisco or Oakland. This would overcome one of the major reasons presented for rejecting the Altamont alternative.

USE THIRD RAIL ELECTRIFICATION

The EIR/EIS indicates that the system would be electrified using overhead wires. Serious consideration should be given to the alternative of a grade-level electrified third rail (similar to BART), especially in residential urban areas where the system is safely grade separated, for the following reasons:

1. Overhead wires present a very negative visual impact that is counter to the modern trend of undergrounding utility wires.
2. The overhead wires would require extensive removal and pruning back of mature heritage trees in residential areas and parks along the right-of-way. These trees are an irreplaceable natural resource, which would provide visual screening as well as noise insulation from the high-speed trains. The impact of tree removal, including indemnification of property owners, has not been adequately addressed in the EIR/EIS.

1

2

Comment Letter I127 Continued

3. Grade level third rail electrification would probably cost less to construct than an overhead wire system.
4. Third rail electrification should cost less to maintain than overhead wires since work could be done at grade level.
5. Third rail electrification avoids the need for ongoing pruning of overhanging trees.

USE TRENCH IN URBAN AREAS

In urban residential areas evaluation should be made of placing tracks in a trench similar to the approach used in the Alameda Corridor in Los Angeles. Here a freight rail line was constructed in a trench for its entire length from the Port of Long Beach to Los Angeles. This approach would:

1. Minimize visual and noise impacts to streets and properties.
2. Provide safety advantages. A 100 to 124 mph derailment in a populated area, either accidental or from sabotage, would cause far less devastation and loss of life if constrained in a trench.

COMPLETE LOS ANGELES – SAN JOSE SEGMENT FIRST

Serious consideration should be given to scheduling the project so that the segment between Los Angeles and San Jose is completed and made operational as quickly as possible, even before completion to San Francisco or Oakland.

1. The major reason is to start generating revenue as early as possible to help fund remaining segments and reduce total bond requirements.
2. This should also provide an opportunity to gain operational experience and work the bugs out before completing the system to other destinations.
3. It would also defer the need for major funding for the very high-cost link between San Jose and either San Francisco or Oakland if it is decided to construct this extension.
4. On an interim basis service between San Jose and San Francisco could be by Caltrain with its fast Baby Bullet trains. Interim service to Oakland could be by BART.

Thank you very much for your consideration of these ideas in developing your final EIR/EIS.

Sincerely,



Arthur J. Ringham

I127-3
cont.

I127-4

Response to Comments of Arthur J. Ringham, August 28, 2004 (Letter I127)

I127-1

Please see standard response 6.1.4.

I127-2

Please see standard response 2.18.1.

I127-3

All steel-wheel-on-steel-rail HST trains capable of maximum speeds of at least 200 mph (322 kph) rely upon overhead electric lines for power. The Eurostar HST system operates with a third rail power supply at reduced speeds (100 mph {161 kph}) through the Channel Tunnel. Please also see standard response 2.9.2 and standard response 2.10.3.

The Authority worked in coordination with Samtrans to develop the conceptual plans for the HST design along the Caltrain corridor. Through many parts of the alignment, the typical section has been assumed to be elevated (on fill) or depressed. Design concepts such as the use of trenching in urban residential areas should be considered as a part of future project specific studies should the HST proposal move forward.

I127-4

Please see standard response 10.1.7.

Comment Letter I128

I128

August 26, 2004

California High Speed Train Draft Program
EIR/EIS Comments
925 L Street
Suite 1425
Sacramento, CA 95814

To whom:

We are writing to express our concern with the plans for high speed rail on the Peninsula. As residents and homeowners in Menlo Park for the past 13 years, we have enjoyed the small-town atmosphere of the Peninsula. We **strongly oppose** the addition of high speed rail through the Peninsula because its accompanying four tracks and raised grade crossings would significantly impact the quality of life here. In addition, the potential loss of trees along the route would severely change both the aesthetic and the environmental benefits of this area.

I128-1

We urge you to consider the Altamont Pass route for the high speed rail.

I128-2

Laura and Brian Steuer
428 Felton Drive
Menlo Park, CA 94025

Response to Comments of Laura and Brian Steuer, August 26, 2004 (Letter I128)

I128-1

Acknowledged. Please see standard response 6.3.1.

I128-2

Please see standard response 2.18.1.

Comment Letter I129

I129

Larry Alley
2499 E. Gerard Ave. #136
Merced, Ca 95340
209-723-4481

June 6, 2004

Mr. Joseph Petrillo, Chairman
California High-Speed Rail Authority
925 L Street, Suite 1425
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Chairman Petrillo and Members of the Board:

I am pleased to submit this letter of support for the draft program EIR/EIS and the analysis and studies that identified high-speed trains as the preferred system alternative to address the future transportation needs of California.

I am a novice on transportation issues but clearly see the benefits of supporting Castle Airport, Aviation and Development Center as a hub for future High Speed Rail. There are several reasons that should make this a key factor in choosing this site.

- Its location is the center of California.
- A direct link to Amtrak with a spur on the former base.
- A direct link to a proposed rail system to service UC Merced and a future rail to Yosemite Park.
- It has the acreage necessary for the hub without the taking of depleting farm land.
- It has the capacity to support an additional Airport to our national system.

High Speed Rail Comments for EIR/EIS Page 1

AUG 31 2004

With the dire predictions of over capacity on our Highways and Airports, Castle Airport, Aviation and Development Center are the perfect infrastructure for a High Speed Rail hub. Not to mention a high unemployment rate in this area that would benefit the State and this area. I encourage the board to take a very hard look at this location as the most practical of any other proposal. A perfect infrastructure for the 21st century and a great benefit for the future High Speed Rail system.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to provide these comments.

Sincerely,



Larry Alley

Cc: Congressman Dennis Cardoza
Congressman George Radanovich
California Senator Jeff Denham
California Assembly Member Barbara Matthews
Merced County Supervisor Kathleen Crookham
Merced County Supervisor Gloria Cortez Keene

High Speed Rail Comments for EIR/EIS Page 2

I129-1
cont.

Response to Comments of Larry Alley, June 6, 2004 (Letter I129)

I129-1

Please see standard response 6.19.1.

Comment Letter I130

FROM : DILLARD

FAX NO. : 323+225-6620

Aug. 31 2004 04:20PM P1

FROM : DILLARD

FAX NO. : 323+225-6620

Aug. 31 2004 04:21PM P2

1130

JOYCE DILLARD
P.O. Box 31377
Los Angeles, CA. 90031
Email: dillardjoyce@yahoo.com

FAX (323) 225-6620

August 31, 2004

California High-Speed Rail Authority
California High-Speed Train
Draft Program EIR/EIS Comments
925 L Street Suite 1425
Sacramento, CA. 95814

FAX (916) 322-0827

Our concern centers on the area of Los Angeles in regards to open space and school acquisitions. This project has no considerations or planning for the minority and low-income residents.

The Cornfields and Taylor Yard were purchased specifically to provide park space to poverty areas underserved. The land titles were held by the railroad companies then sold to private developers then purchased by the taxpayer at extremely over-inflated prices.

Nowhere do we remember reading that a High-Speed Rail was being routed by the Los Angeles River to the Union Station.

The Mitigated Negative Declarations (MND) for The Cornfields and Taylor Yard had no mitigation for this rail system. We answered both MNDs. The State Parks and Recreation Agency decided against an Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

We feel that issues of Air Quality, Noise and Land Use have not been addressed properly and honestly.

Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) now plans to build a high school on one of the Taylor Yard parcels. This project will affect the attention span and learning capabilities of students. The health issues need to be addressed.

So far, the expectations of the Metro Gold Line have far exceeding the actual usage. Los Angeles is becoming automobile parking poor. Public transportation has proven to be poor due to lack of attention to customer needs IE bathrooms, time, security and instructions.

California High-Speed Rail Authority
California High-Speed Train
Draft Program EIR/EIS Comments
Page 2
August 31, 2004

Housing in the area is being constructed for the workforce. "Workforce" does not mean poverty. Unless a job is within 10 minutes of the end of a rail line, the use of the rail is insignificant.

The University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) has done studies in the Albion Community of the Lincoln Heights Neighborhood that is part of the Central City North Community Plan. The problem here is that the Community was excluded from input. Plans have been made without concern from the REAL needs of the community.

This is a developer's paradise.

Our elected officials, both local and state, have chosen not to inform the surrounding communities of such an important project.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) was granted for the Taylor Yard project. This block grant is \$1,575,000. The purpose of this grant is to improve poverty areas. Now the purpose looks like scenic improvement for the High-Speed Rail.

According to your own tables in "Bakersfield to Los Angeles Region Land Use and Planning, Communities and Neighborhoods, Property, and Environmental Justice Technical Evaluation" Table 4.3.2-1 the poverty levels in the Los Angeles Union Station (LAUS) route area range from 80-92%.

Property values will decrease. Lifestyles may worsen with health and quality of life issues being ignored.

Outreach for this project is poor.

We ask that the poor communities be addressed in this issue of transportation, not just the workforce communities. The use of taxpayer dollars designed to improve the conditions of poverty are being used for improvements for middle-to high-income populations.

Total Pages: 2

1130-1
cont.

1130-1

Response to Comments of Joyce Dillard, August 31, 2004 (Letter I130)

I130-1

Please see standard response 6.24.2. Please also see standard response 8.1.16.